

MINUTES OF THE  
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY GROUP

April 22, 1999  
MAG Office  
302 North First Avenue  
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Debbie Kohn, Avondale, Chairperson  
\*Sandra Finkbeiner, Cave Creek  
Bill Mitchell, Chandler  
Peter Putterman, Fountain Hills  
\*Shawn Woolley, Gilbert  
Steven Jones, Glendale  
\*Jack Blonski, Goodyear  
\*Horatio Skeete, Litchfield Park  
\*Cary Parker, Maricopa County

Jim Hull, Mesa  
Ralph Spencer for Sandy Teetsel, Peoria  
Greg Binder, Phoenix  
\*Jamie Oman-Saltmarsh, Scottsdale  
John Laue, Tempe  
Reyes Medranos for Ralph Velez, Tolleson  
Sabra Mousavi, ADOT  
Randi Alcott for Eddie Caine, RPTA

\*Members neither present nor represented by proxy

OTHERS PRESENT

Betsy Wise, Carefree  
Harry Wolfe, MAG  
Heidi Pahl, MAG  
Rita Walton, MAG  
Jenny Sheppard, Mesa  
Tom Barr, Norstan

Duncan Miller, Paradise Valley  
David Deans, US West  
Kathy DeBoer, WestGroup  
Stephanie Smith, WestGroup  
Dave Stott, 2Help Consulting

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:12 a.m. by Debbie Kohn. Tom Barr participated in the meeting by telephone.

2. Approval of March 25, 1999 Meeting Minutes

Peter Putterman made a correction to the March 25, 1999 meeting minutes, stating that the first sentence of paragraph nine in section five of the minutes should read, "Debbie Kohn stated that a handout explaining the Videoconferencing Project and the upcoming vendor demonstration should be distributed at MAG Management Committee and MAG Regional Council." It was moved by Peter Putterman, seconded by Sabra Mousavi and unanimously recommended to approve the March 25, 1999 meeting minutes as amended.

3. Announcements

David Deans announced that he attended the Government Technology Arizona Executive Leadership Forum and participated in the panel session of Arizona's Telecommunications Future. Mr. Deans distributed talking points from that panel session to MAGTAG members.

4. Telecommuting Program

Randi Alcott introduced Kathy DeBoer of WestGroup Research who gave a presentation on the Telecommuting Program. Ms. DeBoer presented the state of telecommuting research findings of the Employer Survey that were compiled for the Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) to measure awareness, attitudes and current business practices in the Valley regarding telecommuting as a work option.

Kathy DeBoer explained that MAG would email copies of this presentation to MAGTAG members.

During the presentation Jim Hull asked why only half of the employees allowed to telecommute actually telecommute. Kathy DeBoer stated that this question was not asked in the employer survey.

Dave Stott asked if the telecommuting agreement was a formal written agreement or a verbal agreement. Kathy DeBoer replied that it was a written formal agreement.

Peter Putterman asked if the survey asked what type of network was used. Randi Alcott stated that the interviews were only ten minutes and they did not ask the type of network connection or software used.

Debbie Kohn stated that it seems that people are making telecommuting a lot harder than it actually is. Kathy DeBoer agreed that some employers believe telecommuting is difficult and they make it a bigger task than it needs to be. Randi Alcott said that RPTA would provide further education on telecommuting.

Bill Mitchell stated that telecommuters do not necessarily need a computer to telecommute.

Debbie Kohn asked how WestGroup Research defined telecommuting. Kathy DeBoer responded that telecommuting was working from home instead of commuting to and from an employment site outside the home. One can telecommute occasionally on a project by project basis, or on a regular basis one or more days a month. This does not include working overtime during non-scheduled work hours or operating a home-based business. Kathy DeBoer clarified that situational telecommuting such as maternity leave was included in the definition of "project by project basis."

Kathy DeBoer reported that from the employee survey it was determined that telecommute days are less stressful.

Jim Hull asked what the sample size was for the employee survey. Kathy DeBoer reported it was a large sample of 300 people or more.

Randi Alcott commented that RPTA is working on a summer campaign for the Ozone Alert Program and she explained the purpose and timeframe of this campaign.

Debbie Kohn asked if RPTA would like to comment on the success of the Greater Phoenix Telework Day. Randi Alcott said although RPTA was not directly involved in this particular project, that she

felt the Telework day went well especially for setting the stage on telecommuting in the Valley. She noted that negative press on the telecommute day was partially due to extraordinary circumstances (i.e. a large conference that was held in downtown Phoenix on Telework Day, which drew many people to the downtown who would normally not commute to downtown).

Rita Walton noted that average household income for telecommuters according to the research conducted by WestGroup was \$81,000.

Harry Wolfe noted that 68% of people who telecommute do make trips during the day but they are generally shorter trips and during non-peak hours.

Debbie Kohn complimented WestGroup Research on the Executive Summary and Implications for Telecommuting.

##### 5. Agenda for Manufacturer Demonstration of Videoconferencing Equipment

Rita Walton handed out the Draft Agenda for the MAG Videoconferencing Project Manufacturer Demonstration. Tom Barr explained the handout, identified the four manufacturers invited and defined the requirements that all manufacturers would be following. Mr. Barr noted that there are two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. He noted that each manufacturer would have 45 minutes to demonstrate their equipment and a ten minute question and answer period. He said that each session would begin with a 25 minute registration and welcome period.

Debbie Kohn asked why the registration and welcome period is 25 minutes. Mr. Barr explained that it was to allow for late registrants. After some discussion, MAGTAG reached a consensus to shorten registration and welcome to 15 minutes.

Greg Binder asked if all the manufacturers could demonstrate their equipment simultaneously at the manufacturer demonstration. Tom Barr stated that there is not enough bandwidth or network to do this.

Debbie Kohn asked if the remote connections would be with one or two entities. Tom Barr replied with one entity.

Bill Mitchell, asked what MAGTAG should be expecting from the outcome of the demonstrations. Tom Barr stated that the evaluation form distributed to MAGTAG members should be completed at the manufacturer demonstration and the forms and comments would be considered by Norstan in making recommendations.

Debbie Kohn stated that one of the objectives of the demonstration is to allow cities to evaluate all of the equipment in terms of their videoconferencing needs (i.e. desk top, settop, or room system).

Peter Putterman asked if the manufacturers would be connecting with other manufacturers videoconferencing equipment and if there is a way to demonstrate that different systems are standards compliant. Tom Barr said that he would try to arrange that.

John Laue asked if it is possible for manufacturers to demonstrate their equipment at a city. Rita Walton stated that this request would be outside of the Norstan contract but that member agencies could individually investigate other options not included in the Norstan contract.

Debbie Kohn asked Tom Barr if he knew what the manufacturers would be bringing to the demonstration. Tom Barr replied that the manufacturers will bring settop and room systems and they would be demonstrating one or the other.

Peter Putterman noted that he would like to see a range of equipment at this demonstration.

Rita Walton said to Tom Barr that she would encourage manufacturers to bring the whole range of products that they make to show to MAGTAG members. Tom Barr reported that manufacturers would demonstrate one system but would have other systems on display.

Peter Putterman asked if the manufacturer demonstration constitutes a public meeting. Rita Walton replied that it is a public meeting and that if space were a problem preference would be given to MAGTAG members and staff from member agencies.

## 6. Educational Topics

Harry Wolfe distributed the MAG Videoconferencing Evaluation Form to TAG members for comment and review. Tom Barr reviewed the six sections of the form.

Greg Binder noted that the questions on the evaluation form need to be reworded to reflect answers that can be rated on a scale of one to four. Tom Barr agreed to make that change to the evaluation form.

Peter Putterman asked what size room was considered a large size room for videoconferencing. Tom Barr replied that 40 feet by 25 feet is considered a large size room.

Debbie Kohn asked if manufacturers would be given an evaluation form. Tom Barr replied that they would at least be given the major topics.

Debbie Kohn asked how long a camera should take to find the person who is speaking . Tom Barr said about 5 seconds because this camera technology is new.

Rita Walton suggested an RSVP to the manufacturer demonstrations. She commented that invitations would also be sent to TAG members, city managers and mayors. It was stated that space is limited and reservations will be accepted on a "first come first serve basis." MAGTAG members discussed space limitations and came to the consensus that each MAGTAG representative would be responsible for coordinating attendance for their jurisdiction and were to RSVP the number attending to MAG by Wednesday April 28, 1999.

## 7. MAG Videoconferencing Project

Harry Wolfe summarized comments received on the requirements phase working paper. Mr. Wolfe noted that comments included adjustments to room drawings, adding drawings, and making adjustments to text and matrixes.

Steve Jones reported that Norstan came to Glendale and did a site drawing that was not included in the requirements phase working paper.

Peter Putterman noted that the site drawing for Fountain Hills was not correct.

Peter Putterman asked how cities should submit changes to the requirements phase working paper. Harry Wolfe said changes could be faxed or e-mailed to him and he would forward comments to Norstan. Mr. Wolfe urged comments to be in to MAG by end of day Monday April 26, 1999.

Peter Putterman inquired on the progress of linking member agencies into the videoconferencing system. Tom Barr explained that the network and architecture is the next phase of project which has just begun.

Debbie Kohn made several comments to the requirements phase working paper. Tom Barr agreed to make the requested changes to the paper.

Debbie Kohn asked why costs were not included in the manufacturer overview. Tom Barr stated that cost would be covered in Phase Two.

Debbie Kohn asked if all jurisdictions were represented in the room diagrams.

Mr. Wolfe noted that jurisdictions requesting adjustments to their room diagram could forward corrections to Harry Wolfe.

Mr. Wolfe announced that for those jurisdictions who did not designate a room MAG faxed them a generic site drawing based on their room size.

Peter Putterman asked how many rooms at MAG will be used for videoconferencing meetings. Rita Walton replied that at least the Saguaro room and the Palo Verde room have been identified.

8. Update on the Status of Future Funding for Telecommunications Projects

Rita Walton reported that MAG Regional Council meets April 28, 1999 and May 26, 1999 at which time they will be considering the final approval for the Transportation Improvement Project (TIP) 2000-2004. Ms. Walton also noted that the funds for small town connections (\$75,000) and the funds for videoconferencing training and a staff person to support MAG telecommuting efforts (\$200,000) has been included in the proposed 1999-2000 MAG Unified Work Program.

9. Date of Next Meetings

Debbie Kohn suggested that MAGTAG meet prior to the next scheduled meeting to discuss the Manufacturer Demonstration. On May 6, 1999 at 10:00 a.m. MAGTAG will hold a brief meeting by telephone. For those who wish to attend the meeting in person, the MAG Palo Verde room will be available.

The next meeting of the MAGTAG will be held on Thursday May 27, 1999 at the MAG Office Building. The remainder of meetings for 1999 are as follows:

May 27, 1999  
June 24, 1999  
July 22, 1999  
August 26, 1999  
September 23, 1999  
October 28, 1999  
December 9, 1999

The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 a.m.